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June 2, 1959

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To: The Acting Secretary

Through: S/S

From: EUR - Foy D. Kohler *far*

Subject: Significant points in Geneva memoranda of conversations

The following developments reported in memoranda of conversations in Geneva received in the Department since my May 29 memorandum to Mr. Murphy, a copy of which went to you, may be of interest.

1. Berlin settlement. In a conversation on May 23 with Dr. Grawe, Merchant said that by "interim solution" we did not mean a standstill proposal, which had serious disadvantages in the US view, but a temporary settlement to be valid until reunification. In a conversation with Duckwitz of the German Delegation on May 28, Thompson said that the reason for contemplating a separate Berlin settlement was to meet the problem of how to justify a Summit conference, pointing out that Berlin seemed to be the only subject on which progress appeared possible.

2. Soviet attitude toward West German rearmament. In private conversations Gromyko has several times reflected Soviet concern about the atomic arming of the Federal Republic. On May 21, for example, following the Secretary's dinner, Gromyko attacked the trend toward atomic arming of West Germany and appeared totally unimpressed by the Secretary's and McElroy's explanation that nuclear warheads would remain in US custody. Similarly in a conversation with Couve on May 22, Gromyko gave the impression that the installation or non-installation of strategic weapons in the Federal Republic was an important matter to the Soviets; when Couve explained that tactical weapons only were involved and that in any case warheads would remain in US custody, Gromyko commented that one could not be sure that this would always be the case.

3. Duration...

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3. Duration of Conference. At a meeting of the four Western Foreign Ministers on May 22, there was a discussion of a possible termination date for the conference on West German initiative. Couve doubted the desirability of the West's pressing for fixing a terminal date because of the propaganda disadvantages. The Secretary commented that the Soviets appeared to envisage a lengthy conference, pointing out that in his nuclear test discussion with Gromyko the latter had asked that the test negotiators submit a report to the Foreign Ministers (which could not be done until some time after June 8 when the nuclear test conference re-convenes).

4. Summit site. Duckwitz of the West German Delegation reported on May 29 that Illichev of the Soviet Delegation had suggested Berlin as a possible Summit site and was not disturbed when Duckwitz pointed out that the only suitable facilities in Berlin for a Summit conference would be the Congress Hall in West Berlin.

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